

IRAQ 2011 – AN END STATE WORTH THE COST?

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

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Many people fail in life, not for lack of ability or brains or even courage but simply because they have never organized their energies around a goal.

—Elbert Hubbard
American Philosopher

The Iraq Experience

The United States Department of Defense has been focused on Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) since 2003. OIF demonstrated US dominance in Major Combat Operations (MCO) as well as a lack of expertise and excellence in Irregular Warfare (IW) and especially in Counterinsurgency Operations (COIN). OIF, along with Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), has placed the US military into prolonged combat operations for the first time since the 1970s. OIF has served as a combat laboratory for the US military, providing the opportunity to test concepts and equipment at all levels. Most importantly however, OIF is an extended campaign across the full spectrum of conflict with important, arguably vital US National interests involved that has consumed immeasurable national treasure in terms of 4256 American lives lost, 31,010 Americans wounded, and 603 billion U.S. dollars spent, and has affected the way our Nation is viewed by both allies and adversaries world-wide.¹

The Greatest Generation

OIF has defined a generation of our Nation's military leaders who joined the military at the end of the Vietnam era in the 1970s. This generation matured during the 1980s, a decade dedicated to rebuilding the military in the Cold War environment. This generation assumed organizational leadership positions in the 1990s commanding battalions and brigades during a decade characterized by a series of small scale

contingencies, stability operations, conducted in a domestic political environment expecting a post-Cold War peace dividend in the form of reduced Defense budgets and spending. This generation assumed strategic leadership positions at the outset of the 21st century commanding divisions, corps, and combatant commands while simultaneously supporting the Secretary of Defense's transformation vision. This generation was both responsible for achieving victory in Iraq and establishing a strategic or institutional culture prepared to dominate in the post-OIF period of the 2010s. This generation has performed heroically and has the Nation at the brink of beginning the post-OIF era. In Iraq though, unclear division of labor in the post-MCO Iraq and an initial miscalculation enabled a powerful insurgency to take root and nearly defeat US efforts to establish a viable democracy in Iraq. The failure to identify the scope of the subsequent Nation-building task produced as a result of the initial offensive to remove Saddam Hussein's Baathist regime from rule over Iraq severely hampered US efforts through 2005. After 2005, the lack of a clearly articulated end state nested within clearly articulated US interests hampered tactical and even operational leaders' efforts to "win in Iraq". The problem became quite simply – what does it mean to win in Iraq? Now, with the withdrawal of the vast majority of US forces looming in 2011 and with at least a viable level of security achieved in Iraq, this same generation must articulate and achieve an advantageous end state in Iraq which could serve as the catalyst for regional security in the coming years.

Better Late Than Never

Joint Publication 1-02 defines end state as "The set of required conditions that defines achievement of the commander's objectives."² In practice, end state should

describe the required conditions with respect to the enemy or threat and his capabilities, the environment with respect to how entities are arrayed, and friendly forces in terms of their capabilities. Given the negotiated agreement for US forces to depart by the end of 2011, a clear articulation of this end state is critical both to shape OIF efforts for the next 2 years as well as to understand the post-OIF environment that will exist in the Middle East, particularly with respect to Iraq and Iran. There has been little public debate regarding the desired end state for Iraq. Procedurally, the end state should have been described completely prior to executing Operation Iraqi Freedom back in 2003. Regardless of conditions or objectives achieved in Iraq, the political pressure for withdrawal of US forces from Iraq has solidified the initiative to remove US forces by 2011. Unfortunately, our failure to understand the ensuing nation-building tasks which would confront US forces for over 5 years led to an incomplete end state that drove our operations in Iraq.³ Instead, there was a focus on regime change with limited analytical effort applied to the complete statement of end state which was necessary to guide an interagency effort in Iraq. Additionally, domestic (in both Iraq and the US) and international political pressures have hastened the Framework Agreement to include a scheduled withdrawal date of 2011. Given this critical lack of a complete end state – this paper offers a proposed end state to focus efforts through 2011 in Iraq as well as describe the post-OIF conditions in the region to provide a reasonable framework to base further regional strategy and policy.

General (Retired) Barry McCaffrey has conducted a series of visits to Army and Joint Unified Commands in support of both OIF and OEF. During his visits, he receives briefings and then conducts interviews of leaders at every level. He has a unique ability

to understand the challenges facing each echelon of command and to articulate the risks involved in pursuing strategy options. He recently completed a visit to Iraq and subsequently described the threats facing Iraq in the upcoming years.⁴ Given the quality and timeliness of his work, it will be the basis for identifying the threats to base the OIF end state articulated for 2011. General McCaffrey is not the only source of ideas regarding threats to Iraq. Several other sources provide similar assessments based on opinions being formed from information and analysis provided by the US military. However, I will list the threats to Iraqi peace and US interests with respect to Iraq identified by General McCaffrey then propose end state conditions associated with each threat, based on the body of my research. There were six basic threats identified:

- 1) Sectarian paralysis /violence
- 2) Iranian meddling
- 3) Lack of governance capacity leaving Iraq a failed state
- 4) Regional conflict involving Turkey and Kurdish Iraqis
- 5) Class warfare created by unfair oil revenue distribution
- 6) Violations of Iraqi sovereignty by Iran and/or Syria⁵

End State – Threat Conditions

The first set of threats that could preclude meeting of US objectives and furthering US interests in Iraq includes sectarian paralysis limiting Iraqi governance capacity leading to civil unrest followed by sectarian violence spilling into civil war. A subset or similar political threat includes Iraq becoming an “electocracy” (vice a democracy) where wealth is unfairly distributed to the detriment of Sunnis nation-wide. Iraq’s democratic progress could be stymied by a lack of resources (intellectual capital,

foreign direct investment) which could limit the Iraqi government's ability to provide services to meet their contract with the population.⁶ The following end state conditions are necessary to preclude these potential problems from threatening US interests in Iraq:

1) Potential sectarian issues are suppressed by Iraqi government's ability to form coalitions to meet major needs of the populace.

2) Moderate leaders from each party are capable and committed to finding Iraqi vice sectarian or tribal solutions to include distribution of wealth, economy, and religious freedom.

3) Iraqis who fled violence return (due to improved conditions and brokered incentives) to occupy positions of influence.

4) Foreign direct investment is flowing due to improved conditions and brokered incentives.

Conditions 1 and 2 must be achieved by intensive interaction with Iraqi government officials and must include a concerted effort to instill democratic values and leadership traits among the Iraqi political body. Conditions 3 and 4 are reliant on a sustained and improving security situation free of sectarian violence as well as a belief that Iraqi unity is sustainable and desirable. Conditions 3 and 4 require both security forces and the Iraqi political body to function properly.

The second set of threats that could preclude meeting of US objectives and furthering US interests in Iraq includes Iranian involvement forcing Iraqi transformation into an Iranian buffer state and/or devolution into an extremist Shia Theocracy joining an

anti-Israeli alliance.⁷ The following end state conditions are necessary to preclude these potential problems from threatening US interests in Iraq:

5) Sunni and Kurd groups form a coalition within the government to suppress Iranian ability to unduly influence Shia hard-liners.

6) Moderate Shias gain power by working with Kurds and Sunnis to gain a relative advantage over Sadrists and Badrists.

7) Iraqi Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Ministry of Interior (MOI) effectively police the Iraqi borders and begin effective counter-intelligence (CI) work against Iranian agents operating within Iraq.

8) The Iraqi Constitution is honored and enforced by the judicial branch who provides adequate checks and balances to offset corruption or sectarian leanings.

Clearly the Iranian influence will be sizeable in Iraq due to the Shia religious ties to Iranian Imams as well as family ties across the borders, especially amongst Shia hard-liners, but end state conditions 5-8 must be achieved to reduce sectarian strife and distrust within Iraq. Conditions 5 and 6 will require Iraqi political and social efforts with potential US State Department assistance. Condition 7 requires both the US Defense Department (DOD) to ensure that Iraq possesses the capability to police their borders and the US State Department assistance to instill in the Iraqi government the will to secure their Nation. Instilling will in elected officials is a daunting task, but through education, mentoring, and by motivating educated professionals to return to Iraq, good governance is feasible. Condition 8 will require US Justice Department assistance, likely administered in conjunction with the US military. It is critical to develop an Iraqi body above reproach to act as an honest broker and to ensure their ethnic, sectarian

and other social issues are marginalized in favor of the nationalistic principles outlined in the Iraqi Constitution.

The third set of threats that could preclude meeting of US objectives and furthering US interests in Iraq centers on Iraq as a failed state. In this scenario, Iraq fails to provide opportunities to Islamic youths spawning additional terrorists for Al Qaeda and others and Iraq's inability to govern all of its territory allows freedom of action to Al Qaeda or Hezbollah terrorist groups and other organized criminal rings which would undermine the authority and credibility of the Iraqi government.⁸ The following end state conditions are necessary to preclude these potential problems from threatening US interests in Iraq:

9) Adequate governance provides employment, services, and opportunities to all sects.

10) Nationalistic government for all people ensures Sunnis remain Iraqis first instead of identifying with extremist Sunni ideology.

11) Governmental Ministries are nationalistic not sectarian based and demonstrate willingness and ability to govern all Iraqis and Iraqi territory.

Clearly the economic challenges and sectarian influence will be significant in Iraq, most notably amongst Sunni hard-liners who lost power when the Baathist/Saddam regime fell, but end state conditions 9-11 must be achieved to reduce the potential for terrorism to flourish within Iraq. Organized crime is problematic but an internal Iraqi problem unless it crosses borders or facilitates terrorism. Conditions 9-11 will require Iraqi political and social efforts with potential US State Department assistance. It is critical to eradicate conditions which might spawn terrorism prior to US

military departure in 2011 to set conditions for a decreased terrorism threat in the greater Middle East.

The fourth set of threats that could preclude meeting of US objectives and furthering US interests in Iraq includes Kurdish terrorists attacking Turkey and subsequent Turkish responses against Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) in Iraq spills over into expanded regions within Iraq causing regional conflict.⁹ The following end state conditions are necessary to preclude these potential problems from threatening US interests in Iraq:

12) Iraq suppresses the PKK ensuring no attacks emanate from their sovereign territory.

13) Iraq suppresses any Turkish response to PKK generated or sponsored attacks through strong diplomacy.

14) Kurdish leaders denounce terrorism and accept semi-autonomy within the Kurdish regions of Iraq as a satisfactory state of affairs for the near term and agree to pursue peaceful means to gain access to or control of historically Kurdish regions within present day Turkey.

Conditions 12-14 will require Iraqi military, political and social efforts with potential US State Department or International Governmental Organization (such as NATO, UN, or a Middle Eastern based multilateral institution) assistance. Iraq may also require US diplomatic efforts to assist in negotiations with Turkey to suppress Turkey's desires to retaliate against the Kurdish people in Northern Iraq. It is critical to suppress any external stimulus which could derail Iraqi social and economic progress. Perceived hardships on the Iraqi state generated by sectarian elements could cause national

coalitions to disintegrate leading Iraq into the threats described above. From a US perspective, Turkey is an important, secular Islamic ally and NATO partner and it is detrimental to US interests of regional security to allow conflict between two US partner states – Iraq and Turkey, to fester.¹⁰

The fifth set of threats that could preclude meeting of US objectives and furthering US interests in Iraq includes a corrupt Iraqi government selling oil/gas resources to unscrupulous nations seeking cheap resources (China for instance) for elitist gain then failing to distribute wealth equitably amongst the Iraqi populace creating unrest and below market resource deals upsetting the economic balance of power world-wide.¹¹ The following end state conditions are necessary to preclude these potential problems from threatening US interests in Iraq:

15) A national Iraqi coalition government honors the constitution.

16) Leaders of integrity maintain a viable contract with their citizens by providing key services and distributing wealth equitably.

17) Governance reforms enable private investment in Iraqi resource industries limiting ability of the Iraqi governmental leaders to access profits privately.

Conditions 15-17 will require checks and balances created by the Iraqi coalition form of government, with potential US State Department assistance, to ensure good governance flourishes. These conditions will be critical to preclude Iraq from becoming a state whose resources are drained for short term gain at the expense of sustainable growth across a wide economic sector. The temptation to generate quick wealth will be high, so a sense of values centered on improving the quality of life of all constituents

and selfless service, instilled in the Iraqi political body will be critical to achieving the described conditions.

The sixth set of threats that could preclude meeting of US objectives and furthering US interests in Iraq includes Syria and/or Iran attempting to annex Iraqi border land to provide buffers and to gain resources inciting regional conflict.¹² The following end state conditions are necessary to preclude these potential problems from threatening US interests in Iraq:

18) Combined Iraqi security forces and Coalition airpower suppress any external threats.

19) Multi-lateral agreements exist to suppress any border state expansion threat.

20) Iraqi government effectively interacts in the international community to leverage institutions to enforce international law.

Conditions 18-20 will require either an amendment to the currently negotiated Framework agreement or the accelerated development of an Iraqi Air Force and Fires capability. The emergence of a regional, Middle East based, multi-lateral security organization or at least strengthened bi-lateral relations between Iraq and Syria will also help facilitate meeting conditions 18-20.¹³ The US Government and military can mitigate the risk of failing to develop adequate airpower within Iraq by negotiating to secure additional basing rights for airpower capability in either Kuwait or Saudi Arabia. The US should focus future regional diplomatic efforts to ensure that an immature, developing Iraqi government is not immediately challenged by external forces which could further polarize domestic sectarian emotions.

The threats facing US interests and Iraqi success in the future are numerous and serious. All elements of national power must be focused on achieving critical end state objectives in the upcoming two years to facilitate success in an important, volatile region, the Middle East. American policy towards Iraq has demonstrated flexibility and reactive tendencies over the past five years. Over the next two years, flexibility needs to be exchanged for commitment and focus and a reactive policy transformed into an integrated, pro-active approach.

End State - Environment

The second component of defining the end state of a campaign is to describe the desired conditions as they pertain to the environment including the geography, infrastructure and the political and cultural aspects of the Iraqi society. Establishing the desired conditions requires efforts by both the international community and domestic actions by the Iraqi government and citizenry alike. While the US can not unilaterally ensure these conditions are met, these objectives must focus all US efforts across the disparate elements of national power.

The first and most obvious aspect of the environment has been mentioned previously but must be reiterated as a societal based condition. One of the most basic responsibilities of any state is providing security to its population. In Iraq's case, quite simply all international borders can not be physically secured yet the state must reduce infiltration by extremist actors sponsored by states or non-states. Recognizing this task is monumental, the critical goal of securing borders remains in an attempt to limit the disruptive forces which currently prey on sectarian issues. Border security need not be an impenetrable fence, but instead a system based on rule of law and honest execution

of Iraqi law. As mentioned previously, this condition must be ensured by both Iraqi MOD and MOI.

The second critical environmental condition to be established in Iraq is critical to the ability of the Iraqi government to raise necessary revenue to achieve most necessary conditions. The oil and gas industries must efficiently produce revenue enabling the government to fulfill its constitutional contract with the populace. The productivity and efficiency of this vital industry is dependent upon good governance, security, infrastructure improvements, and the presence of skilled managers and engineers. A competitive oil and gas industry functioning at near capacity is critical to Iraq's short and long term success.¹⁴

The third critical environmental condition critical to both the US and Iraq achieving their separate national interests centers on the Iraqi infrastructure and service industry. In order for the Iraqi government to maintain the support of the population, the Iraqi infrastructure must be capable of fulfilling the expectations of the populace in terms of providing necessary services and employment opportunities.¹⁵ The Iraqi government must ensure that these conditions are met but US diplomatic efforts can also assist Iraq in gaining funding for necessary infrastructure improvements. The US can also provide technological advice to efficiently improve services via infrastructure expansion. The US needs the Iraqi populace to support the Iraqi government in order for the US to further US national interests regarding economic prosperity and regional stability in the Middle East. The cost of US involvement in Iraq remains substantial.

The fourth critical environmental condition critical to both the US and Iraq achieving their separate national interests centers on the social fiber and compliance of

the diverse population. For the Iraqi government to succeed, and for the US to further its national interests, Iraq's religious sects and tribes must submit to national laws and governance. The population submitting to the constitution and majority democratic rule is a critical condition necessary to allow Iraqi security and governance to improve. This important condition will also positively influence foreign investment and internal productivity ensuring necessary capital is available to increase governance and service capacity within Iraq. As governance improves, Iraqi domestic security will improve, providing an example of secular, democratic government in the Middle East allowing regional security to improve, thus furthering US National interests pertaining to the region.

The fifth critical terrain based condition critical to both the US and Iraq achieving their separate national interests centers on the location and nature of remaining foreign military power necessary to ensure Iraq's security. This objective assumes that an amendment to the Framework Agreement is negotiated and approved based on the nature of external threats posed by both Iran and Syria and the inability of Iraq and Coalition forces to embed these capabilities within the Iraqi military over the next two years. Combined, Joint bases in key rural areas such as Balad and Talil will provide Iraqi security forces with key capabilities to include ballistic missile defense, counter-air and close air support, precision massed fires in terms of missile and rocket artillery, tactical air mobility, and access to two heavy Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) sized quick reaction forces.¹⁶ These bases will include advisors transitioning these capabilities from coalition nations to Iraqi Security Forces as well as Coalition Quick Reaction Forces (QRFs) and operational Iraqi Security Forces. These US or coalition

forces will operate outside of the Iraqi population except during emergencies and will operate within the negotiated Status of Forces Agreement.

The sixth critical environmental condition critical to both the US and Iraq achieving their separate national interests centers on a mechanism to facilitate the continuing development of a professional Iraqi military capable of setting an example for democratic conduct and professionalism within Iraq and the Middle East. To this end, a necessary condition for long term success will be establishing a Combined (US/Multinational and Iraqi) National Level Headquarters (HQ) which performs both national strategic functions and institutional functions. The continued presence of multinational advisors will assist Iraqi Security Forces in establishing sustainable programs and institutions to man, train, equip and sustain Iraqi Security Forces as well as provide strategic and operational Command and Control to Iraqi Security Forces and advice to Iraqi civilian leaders in accordance with their constitution. A Combined HQ will provide daily examples of professionalism as well as presence of allies to encourage continued development and serve as a further deterrent to any external threats. This Combined HQ can also ensure that the US and Iraqi forces and governments share a common operational picture, facilitating enhanced decision-making.

The seventh critical environmental condition critical to both the US and Iraq achieving their separate national interests centers on a mechanism to facilitate the employment of the niche Coalition capabilities such as fires, air support, and air mobility which Iraqi Security Forces will likely lack in 2011. Advisors, preferably United Nations or at least Multi-national, remain in support of Iraqi Security Forces to facilitate access to Coalition enabling forces and capabilities. These advisors will live with Iraqi Security

Forces, gaining resupply and support from the few large Coalition/Combined bases described above. This capability will also ensure that Iraqi Security Forces remain committed to the Iraqi Constitution and are neither sympathetic to nor supportive of sectarian causes or agendas.

The environmental conditions are critical to achieving an end state in Iraq in 2011 which furthers US interests in both the short and long term. The environmental conditions are more easily obtained directly by US actions than the enemy or threat based conditions which rely more heavily on the Iraqi government. To achieve the environmental conditions however, the existing Framework Agreement will need to be modified to allow additional US forces, currently being called “non-combat forces”, to remain in Iraq beyond 2011. This initiative requires extensive US and Iraqi diplomatic and strategic communications work and effort.

End State – Friendly Forces

The third component of defining the end state of a campaign is to describe the desired conditions as they pertain to the friendly forces and in this case that refers to both the US Government and military. Establishing the desired conditions requires US diplomatic efforts, both domestically and abroad, focused on restoring image and trust while refocusing efforts on the US economy and efforts in Afghanistan. While the US can not unilaterally ensure these conditions are met, these objectives must focus all US efforts across the disparate elements of national power and must be initiated by the US.

The first friendly force based condition to be achieved is the restoration of the US national and military image. The United States’ image has suffered particularly with respect to our role as a leader within multi-lateral institutions such as the UN. We must

focus diplomatic and informational elements of power on restoration of the US image as law-abiding, trusted guardians of freedom who work within the framework of international law and existing multi-lateral institutions. We need not apologize for defending ourselves or our values, or for our relative power which exceeds that of any other Nation, but we must acknowledge the difference between leadership and subjugation and the former is a role much more conducive to maintaining a dominant role over the long term.¹⁷

The second friendly force based condition to be achieved is the increased image of the US as a dedicated, trustworthy bi-lateral partner. Over the next two years our conduct in leaving Iraq better off than when we arrived in 2003 with a secure, stable, prosperous future, will be as important to current and potential bi-lateral partners and allies as to Iraq and the US. We must enhance our image as bi-lateral treaty partners – we keep our word and honor our agreements and responsibilities, operate within multi-lateral frameworks, and are not imperialistic. In this regard, our deeds speak louder than our words, but the crafting of our words explaining and highlighting our deeds is nearly as important.

The third friendly force based condition to be achieved is the increased image of the US as a dominant military foe willing and capable to victoriously execute pre-emptive, preventive, or retaliatory war across all spectrums of conflict. In 2003 we demonstrated a mastery of major combat operations. In 2011, the end state of Iraq will dictate whether we merely survived our COIN experience in Iraq or dominated there as well. The ability of the US to deter hostile acts which threaten US interests must be enhanced by our departure from Iraq in 2011 based not only on our regenerated combat

forces but also by the legacy of our actions with respect to Iraq. Deterrence is a complex condition. While deterrence is based on US military and political will and capability the effectiveness of our deterrence can only be measured by the impact it achieves on the international community and the changed behavior of actors to abandon their own interests in deference to our power.

The fourth friendly force based condition centers on our image within the growing Muslim population world-wide. In this regard, the US image must be enhanced across the Muslim world by effectively communicating the message that the US is not undertaking an anti-Muslim crusade. Our message and actions must communicate across the world that we help Muslims as well as non-Muslims and are culturally sensitive within our own values base. Our initial inability to understand the Iraqi culture led us to avoid religion and religious communications. This strategic choice was based on fear of US forces being portrayed as Christian Crusaders against the Muslim faith.¹⁸ Our choice to limit conversation and interaction with regard to religion allowed adversaries to dictate the religious message. It is important to cease our passive posture towards religion in Iraq, and take a more aggressive approach to ensure a maximized end state in 2011. An aggressive approach includes confronting governmental behavior which is counter to the teachings of Islam. To this end, US communications must illustrate friendly religious respect and tolerance as well as our adversaries' anti-Muslim practices such as terrorism. Our passive approach was focused on not losing – with victory within our grasp an active and aggressive approach designed to discredit rogue religious leaders and politicians can ensure lasting victory with our interests furthered in the short and long term.

The fifth friendly force based condition, which is our Nation and Coalition against terrorism is clearly focused on achieving victory in the Global War on Terror, is critical to winning in Afghanistan. Our military and national focus has been on Iraq since 2003. During this time, Operation Enduring Freedom – Afghanistan has clearly been our secondary effort. Admiral Mullen, while visiting Afghanistan as the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said “In Afghanistan we do what we can. In Iraq, we do what we must.”¹⁹ This quote illustrates the constrained OEF-A environment. The largest constraint which has limited OEF-A progress has been a lack of resources. The very resources needed in Afghanistan were in Iraq, by choice. In 2011 this dynamic will change. From a military perspective, it is important that through strategic communications and resource decisions our Nation is focused on Afghanistan and the Taliban/Al Qaeda. From a political standpoint, the Administration must balance the required international focus on Afghanistan and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) with the global economic crisis. The Administration must both gain domestic and international support to see OEF-A through to victory while simultaneously focusing on the recession/economy and developing alternative energy sources to relieve our dependence on oil. Achieving strategic and national unity of effort and total commitment with regard to Afghanistan is a critical component of our national end state with regard to Iraq in 2011.

The sixth friendly force based condition, a viable Arab/Israeli agreement centered on Palestine, is critical to achieving a lasting peace in the Middle East. There are two key components to regional peace and stability in the Middle East, a stated US national interest.²⁰ The first is establishment of viable democratic governments in the region to

inspire better governance throughout the region. This will be accomplished as an end state objective in Iraq in 2011. The second component however, is a viable Arab/Palestinian – Israeli peace settlement. The lack of a recognized peace settlement remains the incendiary issue amongst all Middle Eastern Nations creating conditions for dictators, religious extremists and terrorists to flourish.²¹ The US Government must commit to leading an international effort to achieve a reasonable, acceptable peace settlement with regard to Israel to provide the basis for regional peace and stability. The credibility and presence of the US in the Middle East will be at its highest point as we approach our negotiated departure from Iraq in 2011. The Administration must leverage this strategic military success to achieve a diplomatic victory in regards to the Arab-Israeli situation to maximize US interests in the region in 2011.

The final friendly force based condition reflects the economic focus of our national government both domestically and as a driving force within the global economy. Our domestic efforts must accomplish two key goals: 1) reduce the growing gaps between the middle and upper classes in earning power and distribution of wealth,²² and 2) reducing our dependence on foreign capital and reducing our budget and trade deficits.²³ It is important as military advisors, to understand the criticality of the economic conditions the Obama Administration will face in 2011 as we must temper military expectations based on the limited amount of “national energy” that will be available as most will be committed to the economic conditions. With resource competitions brewing across several continents to include Northern Africa and Western Europe we will likely focus efforts outside of the Middle East. Given an expanding economic competition with China, it is likely the US will attempt to improve business

conditions in Africa to enable private investment to become viable. Private investment will be essential to counter the nationalization of industries by ineffective African governments. Nationalized industries controlled by unscrupulous governments have and will fall prey to Chinese initiatives to gain below market share access to resources which is enabling artificial economic growth in China. Artificially high growth in China contributes to the growing class wealth gap domestically in the US. Efforts in Africa must attempt to maintain an acceptable economic balance of power between US and China.²⁴ While the US military has virtually no control over the economic end state, we must understand the critical role the economy will play in any military efforts in the future. The economic conditions will dictate both defense budgets of the future as well as our national leadership's willingness to focus on military or security issues.

Operation Iraqi Freedom has consumed over 5 years of our national focus, over 4500 lives, and countless billions of dollars. Over the next 2 years, our efforts across the wide range of issues discussed above will ultimately decide whether these sacrifices were worth the effort. The interests and strategic objectives leading us to war in Iraq were not well stated, understood, or published such that the Nation could understand the national vision for Iraq and the Middle East region. In 2009, through concerted efforts, and clear articulation of what are important objectives and how they can be achieved (ways and means) the sacrifices of the past 5 years can be parlayed into an end state which furthers US interests significantly and establishes conditions for long term improvement, stability, and prosperity in the Middle East region. The end state for Iraq in 2011 must not be viewed as our departure but instead as the achievable conditions we can gain to ensure our sacrifices were necessary.

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